

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action was issued on pending claims 1-17. Claims 1-15 stand rejected and claims 16 and 17 have been withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. In this Response, claims 1, 3-5 and 13 have been amended, claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice and no claims have been added. Thus, claims 1 and 3-17 are pending in the application, and claims 1 and 3-15 are under consideration.

Applicants invite the Examiner to call Applicants' Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Drawing Objections

At page 2 of the Office Action, Figures 13 and 14 were objected to as not having a legend such as "Prior Art." Figs. 13 and 14 have been amended to include the legend "Prior Art." The enclosed amended figures are formal drawings.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the drawing objections should be withdrawn.

Claim Objections

At Office Action page 2, claim 13 was objected to as containing an informality. Claim 13 has been amended to correct the spelling of the word "through."

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the claim objections should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112

At page 3 of the Office Action, claims 3-5 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully disagree. However, claims 3-5 have been amended to clarify the claims. No new matter has been added and no subject matter has been surrendered.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the §112 rejections should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

In Office Action pages 3-5, claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Horita et al. (US 5,181,298) in view of Minato (US 5,771,546) and Dubost (FR 2 665 346). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants' invention, as claimed in claim 1, pertains to a pull tab of a slide fastener slider. One example of Applicants' claimed pull tab of a slide fastener slider is shown in Figs. 1-4. The pull tab 2 has a core member 9 formed by integrally joining, through an intermediate portion 10, a slider body coupling member 7 and a decorative member 8 having a decorative portion 15. The pull tab 2 also has a resin cover-molded around the decorative portion 15 and a part of the intermediate portion 10, through which the covered part can be seen. See the specification at page 9, line 11 – page 11, line 8.

The reference numbers are for convenience to refer to the example of Applicants' invention shown in the drawings and described in the Specification and are not intended to limit the claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the feature of claim 2 and claim 2 has been cancelled. Applicants submit that the combination of Horita et al., Minato and Dubost, if such combination is proper, does not render Applicants' claimed invention obvious. Furthermore, the combination of those references to render the claims obvious is improper.

Horita et al. shows and describes a pull tab body 20 which is made out of a natural material such as wood. Other natural materials mentioned by Horita et al. include ivory, tortoiseshell, shell, and horn. The wood pull tab body 20 certainly does not have a decorative member inside. Furthermore, one cannot see through the wood pull tab body 20. In the embodiment shown in Fig. 12, Horita et al. mentions the body 20 can be made of quasi-natural materials or plastic resembling the natural materials in appearance. Such quasi-natural materials or plastic would be similar to wood and not permit a decorative member to be seen inside of the body. Accordingly, there would be no motivation to modify Horita et al. to include a decorative member inside of the body because the decorative member would not be seen.

In the Fig. 12 embodiment, Horita et al. does describe the pull tab body 20 as being made out of a translucent material. However, nowhere does Horita et al. suggest that a decorative member be inside of the body 12. Indeed, Horita et al. does not show or describe a decorative member inside of any of the pull tab bodies. Furthermore, there is no teaching, suggestion or motivation to modify Horita et al. or to combine Horita et al. with Minato or Dubost to result in Applicants' claimed invention.

The Office Action asserts that Minato shows in Figs. 6, 7, 9 and 12 decorative elements 12 embedded in pull tabs. However, Applicants' claim 1 calls for "a core member formed by integrally joining, through an intermediate portion, a slider body coupling member and a decorative member having a decorative portion; and a resin cover-molded around the decorative portion and a part of the intermediate portion, through which the covered part can be seen." The Minato pull tab having embedded decorative elements simply does not disclose or suggest the features of Applicants' invention as claimed in claim 1. For example, the Minato decorative elements 12 embedded in a pull tab does not show or suggest a core member formed by integrally joining, through an intermediate portion, a slider body coupling member and a decorative member having a decorative portion. Furthermore, the Minato decorative elements 12 embedded in a pull tab does not show or suggest a resin cover-molded around the decorative portion and a part of the intermediate portion.

Turning to Dubost, Dubost shows a fork apparently used for eating food. Nowhere does Dubost show anything related to a slide fastener slider or a pull tab of a slide fastener slider. The Office Action equates the Dubost fork to the Horita et al. and Minato pull tab of a slide fastener slider as all having "a handle on an implement for personal use" to support the combination of the references. Applicants submit that the Dubost fork does not provide a teaching, suggestion or motivation to modify the Horita et al. and Minato slide fastener slider pull tabs. One of ordinary skill in the art of slide fastener sliders would not look to forks for eating food for motivation to modify pull tabs for slide fastener sliders. Furthermore, forks for eating food and pull tabs for slide fastener sliders are non-analogous art.

Therefore, the combination of Horita et al., Minato and Dubost is not proper. Furthermore, even if Horita et al., Minato and Dubost are combinable, the combination does not result in Applicants' claimed invention.

The dependent claims are allowable at least for the reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the § 103(a) rejections should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance and request a Notice of Allowance be issued.

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace the single sheet of drawings of Figs. 13 and 14 originally filed in this application with the enclosed single replacement sheet of drawings of Figs. 13 and 14. The enclosed replacement sheet of Figs. 13 and 14 are formal drawings.